

EVERETT UNDERPRINT AND PERFIN

Maurice Harp

A number of articles have been presented in the Bulletin over the years on the W. H. Everett & Son Ltd private underprint. (**Mike Burrows** Bulletin 170, **Gordan Ward** Bulletin 260, **Dave Hill** Bulletin 310). To cut a long story short, Arthur Everett invented and patented an inking roller that could be used to print the initials of a company on the back of stamps – over the gum. They applied to the Post Office to use this device for the stamps used by the family company of W. H. Everett & Son Limited and finally in 1903 were

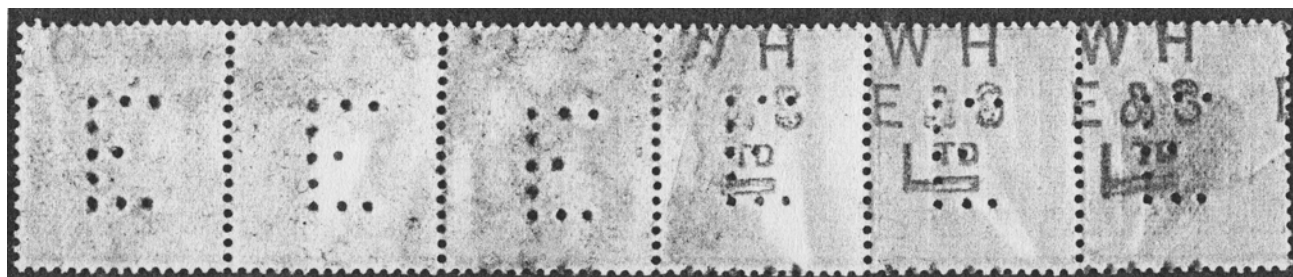


given permission to use it. They even tried marketing the device for £1 although there is no evidence that any other company used this method of security endorsing their stamps. By 1914 they had lost most of their staff to the war effort and were heavily dependant on casual staff. So in 1915 they decided they needed a more secure device and started to use perfin and are known to have used a capital “E” perfin although until now the exact die was not known.

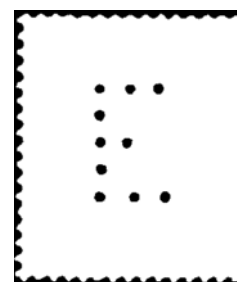
Last month a dealer sent me information on a major collection of private underprints and overprints – material that is rarely seen in any quantity. However the prices were way outside my league. The dealer had included photocopies of the backs of the stamps and included was the mint block shown above with the WH/E&S/Ltd underprint on George V 1912 1d – priced at £1750. Looking closely at the block it can be seen that it’s in fact a block of four with the last two imprints being made on the stamp sheet selvedge.

Also included was an even more interesting piece, a strip of six with both the underprint and perfin “E”. I contacted the dealer to find out what stamps these were struck on, as he had given no description for the item. He replied that the strip was actually an interpanneau strip

from an Edward VII 6d value sheet. The price for this item was £375. The King George V 6d was introduced in August 1913 so this strip cannot date from much later than early 1914 unless the company had some Edward VII stamps left over and this was a test strip of their new perfin machine.



As can be seen the die appears to be a multi-head with at least three patterns. There are only two 10-pin perfin dies that are likely contenders for this die. Measuring the base of the E on the photocopy gives 5.5mm, which is midway between the measurements given for E0010.09 (6mm) and E0010.10 (5mm). However most photocopiers are known to slightly reduce the size of the image. Looking at the dates of use of the two dies I think the die is E0010.09, which was used between 1915-1939 and is recorded with Ludgate Circus, London and NPB cancels. Inspection of a 1915 London directory shows that William Henry Everett & Son Ltd were wholesale newsvendors based at 11 St. Bride St, London EC, which ties in well with the recorded cancellations.



E0010.09

Die E0010.10 though appears to predate this die as its recorded used in Oct 1904. It is also recorded being used in Sheffield and London but I can find no link between Everett and any operation in Sheffield. So E0010.10 can clearly be eliminated.

"EVERETT"
THIEF-STAMP DETECTOR

"THE TIMES" says—
"THE PILFERING OF POSTAGE STAMPS."
 "Many big firms have suffered from the petty pilfering of postage stamps, and numerous devices have been formed with a view to checking the evil. By far the most salutary step in this direction has just been sanctioned by the Postmaster-General, who has given Messrs. W. H. Everett & Son, Ltd., permission to stamp their stamps on the back, and thus prevent them from being stolen. 'For fifteen years past,' they write to a contemporary, 'we have been trying to obtain this, and have at length succeeded.' The passage in the letter from the General Post Office giving the necessary permission runs as follows:—'If . . . you still consider it necessary, in order to prevent pilfering, to adopt the practice of printing your initials on the back of your postage stamps, the Postmaster-General will not withhold his assent to your taking this course; and in the event of your doing so, instructions shall be given to the effect that stamps printed on the back are not to be re-purchased at Post-offices.'—*Times*."

To all who know the danger of allowing stamps to be in the hands of employees in such a state as to be negotiable and only to be identified if the thief is caught red-handed, this cheap and effective method will prove invaluable.

Price (complete) One Pound.
 "This is not one-tenth of the price of a safe, but is a hundred times more effective."

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 Bell's Buildings, Salisbury Square, London, E.C.

"THE NEWSAGENT AND BOOKSELLERS' REVIEW" says—
TO CHECK THE POSTAGE-STAMP THIEF.
 "Not satisfied with having done so much" (secured the consent of the Postmaster General to print on the backs of postage stamps). "Messrs. Everett have gone a step further, and made it possible for everyone to print his initials on the postage stamps himself. They have contrived a handy and clever little apparatus, which they call the 'Everett' Thief-stamp Detector, by means of which half a sheet of stamps can be printed in a few seconds. This they are prepared to supply at the extremely reasonable price of £1. Messrs. Everett will be pleased to furnish the 'trade' with particulars as to prices, &c."—*The Newsagent and Booksellers' Review*."

Price Complete One Pound.